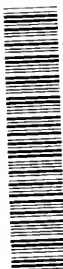


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*CANTABILE*

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE BOOK OF THE BELOVED

*A MODERN EPIC POEM IN THREE PARTS*

PRICE 31/6 NET

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FROM

*THE BOOK OF THE BELOVED*

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3 VICTORIA STREET, LONDON, S.W.

# CANTABILE

*Songs and Poems*

BY

JOHN CALDWELL-JOHNSTON

AUTHOR OF "THE BOOK OF THE BELOVED"

A large, stylized handwritten signature of John Caldwell-Johnston, written in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

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## *There is a Singing in my Heart*

THERE is a singing in my heart,  
A singing, a singing,  
And little birds through every part  
Are winging, are winging.  
The wild wood to the west wind wakes and thrills,  
And fairy bells among the daffodils  
Are ringing, are ringing.

There is a sighing in my heart,  
A sighing, a sighing,  
That yester-eve with deadly smart  
Lay dying, lay dying.  
But, O, the sun of Spring hath waked the rills,  
And throbs of music through the daffodils  
Go flying, go flying.

## *Cherry-Bells, Fairy-Bells, Merry Bells*

CHERRY-BELLS, fairy-bells, merry bells,  
    Chiming, chiming, chiming;  
Multitudes, snow-white hoods, pyramids of snow;  
Sky so blue shining through. Listen what the robin  
    tells,  
    Rhyming, rhyming, rhyming,  
With an air perching there, while the larks to heaven  
    go  
    Climbing, climbing, climbing.

Cherry-bells, fairy-bells, merry bells,  
    Ringing, ringing, ringing;  
Silver bells, silken shells, row on row on row;  
Scented sighs, butterflies. Red-breast pouts and  
    throbs and swells,  
    Clinging, clinging, clinging,  
Debonair, proudly there, while sweet larks to heaven  
    go  
    Singing, singing, singing.

## *April is Here !*

THE meadow-pipit cheeping in the thorn,

*Peep ! Peep ! Peep ! Peep !*

The grasses and the fragrances of spring,  
The emerald sheen upon the winter corn,

The sun, the shower, the south wind's whispering,  
The new note in the clangour of the sea—  
So April's born !

The whitethroat loves the nettle and the briar,

*Tweet ! Tweet ! Tweet ! Tweet !*

The blackcap shyly flutes within the brake.  
The world is all one song and one desire.

The adder creeps. The hedgehog crawls to slake  
His winter-drouth at waters cool and sweet.  
April's awake !

The willow-warbler whistles by the mere,

*Twee ! Twee ! Twee ! Twee !*

The song-thrush trills, and preens his spotted  
plume.  
The squirrel scolds at blue-jay blundered near.  
The gorse is flame, and nigh to flame the broom.  
The speckled trout leaps in the singing rill.  
April is here !

## *Out Among the Hedgerows*

Out among the hedgerows, out among the dells,  
While the brown-winged linnet tunes his mating-calls

And the blue wild-hyacinth shyly shakes his bells,  
Wind we golden cowslips into golden, dewy balls.

Bees are droning idly, cuckoo twice and thrice  
Utters through the woodland his melodious note.  
Bullfinch trills and warbles, wood-dove soughs and sighs.

Nets of greenest watercresses down the streamlet float.

Out among the hedgerows, out at break of day,  
When the golden sunshine like a mantle falls,  
Gone the tears of April, come the smiles of May,  
Wind we golden cowslips into golden, dewy balls.

## *Tom Tit*

CREEPING and climbing Tom Blue Tit goes,  
Cobalt and gold-green, his fearless way  
Under and over the trellised rose,  
Under and over the apple-spray.  
With his *zet ! zee ! zee !* sharp, harsh and clear  
He greets the sweets of spring's New Year.

Long hath lone celandine spread her gold,  
By the brook the alder-catkin swings,  
The wealth of the windflowers gems the mould,  
And wild through the woodland the mavis rings.  
With his *zet ! zee ! zee !* so harsh and clear  
Tom meets the sweets of spring's New Year.

Juggler and acrobat, jester, too,  
Nothing so little and nothing so big  
That the brave heart armoured in gold and blue  
Sees not and dares not by tree or twig.  
And ever with *zet ! zee ! zee !* sharp and clear  
He jests, fights, swings through spring's New Year.

*I Saw a Blackbird's Egg of  
Cloudy Blue*

I SAW a blackbird's egg of cloudy blue,  
And straightaway, my heart, I thought of you.  
So much sweet love was spent to make that sphere,  
Touched with the eastern sky when dawn is near,  
When round each pale star turquoise faintly glows,  
Herald of dawn's own saffron-tintured rose.  
And, stretching forth my hand, within the nest  
I felt the warmth where mother-heart had pressed,  
And thought it well that thus in guarded thorn  
With mother-warmth a Singer should be born,  
Gold-beaked, black-plumaged, swift of eye and wing,  
And destined to salute the next-year spring.  
Then, lest I harm unwittingly, I drew  
My hand away and went, thinking of you.



## *Some of the Elms*

SOME of the elms are rosy,  
Some are barren still.  
Down in the ditches cosy  
Peeps forth many a posy,  
Dream-drugged yet, and dozy,  
Lulled by the tinkling rill.

Gold are the osier tresses,  
White is the budding thorn.  
Like princes and princesses  
With hawks and spangled jesses,  
Spring's rout of revel presses  
By thicket, bank and bourn.

And like a pair of lovers  
Panting in dear desire,  
The wind, cried down by plovers  
And pied with spring scents, hovers  
Leaguelong where whin uncovers  
Her chariots of fire.

## *That I Love You !*

THE sea is tumbling on the strand,  
The lark is shouting in the blue.  
Spring is abroad through this sweet land.  
At last, at last I understand  
That I love you !

There is a magic in the song  
That April sings me through and through.  
The blackbird's love-enchanted tongue  
Carols that you and I are young,  
And I love you !

White clouds are fleeting in the sky.  
The world is fair and clean and new.  
And, O, the perfect melody  
That you are you, and I am I,  
And I love you !

## *All Up and Down the Clefted Hill*

ALL up and down the clefted hill

The watercourses ring.

All up and down the rocky gill

The nightingales do sing.

The nightingales do sing, and all

The high streams drift in smoke,

And soft the evening shadows fall

On the yet-toiling folk.

The olive-slopes are steeped in dream,

The far peak golden shines,

And palely in the twilight gleam

The newly-springing vines.

The springing vines do gleam, and through

The shadows of the vale

The music of the stream doth woo

Its singing nightingale.

*Behind the Hill the West Wind Sleeps*

BEHIND the hill the west wind sleeps.  
The odours in my garden fail.  
The willow with sad branches sweeps  
The still pool. In the thicket weeps  
One lonely nightingale.

'Twixt dusk and dawn the minutes glide.  
I find no comfort in my flowers,  
That grudge each moment from thy side.  
The dawn lags. Still I chafe and chide  
The slow, chill, dallying hours.

Others woo sleep, but not so I,  
To whom the waiting time is long.  
When shall the dawn flush in the sky,  
And all my garden suddenly  
Bloom in ecstatic song?

## *Aubade*

THE sleeping lawns  
Orient with dewdrops lie.  
A thousand dawns  
Are essenced in this sky.

Lo, softly trills the linnet in the brake.  
Wake, heart ! Put thou these dreams and slumbers  
by !  
Sweetheart, awake !

The world is wide,  
And wide-flung are the hills.  
With summer's tide  
The wilding rose-bud thrills,  
And king-cups gild the margins of the lake.  
Wake, love ! The dawn-waked linnet flutes and  
trills.  
Wake, love ! Awake !

The casement through  
The garden perfumes creep.  
Bright with the dew  
Shy, dancing sunbeams peep.  
With little winds thy curtains creak and quake.  
Wake, dear ! Nay, Love ! Thou canst no longer  
sleep !  
Wake, heart ! Awake !

## *The Lover's Garden*

I HAVE made me a pleasance of roses,  
Of paths that wind and twine,  
Where the white pink spreads her posies,  
And at dusk her stars uncloses  
The fragrant jessamine.

And at dusk a gentle lover,  
Who paces to and fro  
Where the white moths flit and hover,  
Such perfumes shall discover  
As only lovers know.

## *Wireless*

THE roses by the trellised walk are whispering together,  
Shaking their heads and whispering. Their gossip is  
the breeze,  
    Who tells them what the lilies say,  
    The splendid, nodding lilies say,  
And what the ship that brings you told the softly-  
sighing seas.

The beech and elm stand sentinel. Their branches  
wave together,  
Gesticulating friendlily, as is the way of trees  
    Who stand and gossip night and day,  
    The aspen way, the elder way:  
“The south wind brings our mistress home across  
the silver seas!”

They sent the news, but hours ago the garden  
thrummed together,  
For the pansy told the clover, and the clover told  
the bees.  
    O, it's good to wait this English way,  
    This garden way, this pansy way,  
For the ship, the ship that's bringing you home  
through the English seas!

## *The Swallow Rests on the Wing*

THE swallow rests on the wing.  
O swallow ! Dear swallow,  
That takest the path of the Spring,  
To follow, to follow !  
That threadest the high air's unseen, topmost mazes,  
And skimmiest the pink-tipped daisies,  
Unfaltering.

The swallow nests in the eaves.  
O swallow ! Dear swallow,  
When Spring hath put forth her leaves,  
To follow, to follow !  
And all through the golden melody of Summer,  
Her plaint, like a silver slumber,  
Incessant weaves.

Lo, Summer is passing and gone,  
O swallow ! Dear swallow !  
And Winter hasteneth on,  
To follow, to follow !  
Haste thee, away, O wing that ne'er reposes,  
Where waits thee, with other roses,  
Another Sun !



## *Autumn Magic*

Down the elm-bole, raindrops  
Dripping, dripping.  
Down the window-pane, drops  
Skipping, skipping.

Dank leaves in the corners  
Sleeping, sleeping.  
Shrouded yews, like mourners,  
Weeping, weeping.

Maple-flames, like embers,  
Dying, dying.  
Winds of lost Septembers  
Crying, crying.

## *Mist*

Mist  
On the dark trees  
Lying  
Whist,  
And the leaves many suns have kissed,  
Dying,  
These.

Slow  
Stream-song and far,  
Sobbing  
Low  
In the dusk where gleameth no  
Throbbing  
Star.

There  
In the green, damp  
Dingle  
Flare  
Swift rays of an unaware,  
Single  
Lamp.

Cease,  
O mournful Heart,  
Sighing.  
Peace  
Thou canst have, though thou with these  
Dying  
Art.

*Whence Journeyest Thou, Brave  
Hooded Crow?*

WHENCE journeyest thou, brave hooded crow,  
Who thus dost limping come,  
Thy great wings flapping wearily,  
Across this marsh from out yon sea  
That breaks in sullen foam?

Last night the sea-mews shrieked and skreeled,  
The rain beat on my door,  
And through the squalls boomed thunder-guns  
Of wave-claps, squadrons, ranks, platoons,  
Wind-hurled upon the shore.

The sky is like a sheet of gold,  
The high clouds scud and flee.  
Whence comest thou, brave hooded crow,  
With weary wing-beat, grave and slow,  
From out the golden sea?

## *Robber October*

WHIRLING, whirling, whirling,  
Over and over and over,  
Leaves of the elm-tree, leaves of the beech-tree,  
Twisting, shifting, twirling,  
Eddying, sweeping, swirling—  
Yieldeth her each bough, yieldeth her each tree  
To the rude arms of her rude-plucking Lover,  
Robber  
October !

Whining, whining, whining,  
Sadder and sadder and sadder,  
Winds in the aspen, winds in the willow,  
Writhing, wreathing, twining,  
Echoing, keening, pining—  
Earth be my bed, and a cold stone my pillow,  
Yet, lo ! in my dream, built, the Angel-ladder,  
Brother  
October !

## *The Flowers are Sleeping*

THE flowers are sleeping.  
Spread the white counterpane !  
Snow rules the plain.  
The sky is blue,  
Shot through and through  
With the white clouds of the east wind's heaping.

On fen and river  
The long skates, swift skates ring.  
Jack Frost is King.  
The reeds like spears  
Thrust through the meres,  
And bare the pollard-sentries shiver.

## *The Limping Hare Forsakes*

THE limping hare forsakes  
Her jewelled form.  
The red dawn wanly breaks,  
Pregnant with storm.  
Crackling, the cat-ice thinly veils the pond.  
Look, Heart—beyond !

The sobbing wind strikes chill,  
Nor voice is heard.  
The thicket-depths are still.  
Yon mournful bird,  
The feathers bunched about his tuneless throat,  
Dares not one note.

Yet, lo ! the sudden gleam !  
In unthought gold,  
Where thickets darkest seem,  
And all is cold,  
The wilding lawns lie, patched with spangles bright  
Of aconite.

## *The Sleeping Princess*

UP and down the alleys  
Stark and bare,  
Hazel-haunted valleys,  
Still the primrose dallies,  
Golden-Hair  
Spell-bound in her palace.

West winds in the willow  
Sigh and dream.  
On her down-white pillow  
See the tresses yellow,  
Fainting, gleam  
In one golden billow.

Primrose Princess dozes  
Till the Sun,  
Wreathed with Southland posies,  
Kissing her, uncloses  
One by one  
Starry-eyed primroses.



## *Into the Thicket of Song*

INTO the thicket of song, with many a turning,  
Here by the hazels, there where the lilies blow,  
Windeth the pathway of my Soul's deep yearning.  
Into the thicket—the far, sweet stars are burning—  
Into the thicket, my heart, with thee I'd go !

Winged are my feet, the sad strain twines and lingers,  
The lilies sleep upon the swelling stream,  
And weave the stars with thousand, haunted fingers  
The criss-cross patterns of the unseen singers  
Into the robe and glory of my dream.

Up, heart, and onward ! What if thou art riven ?  
What if thou pinest ? Here, where the sweet notes  
throng,  
Here, where like bees the throbbing tones are driven,  
Standest thou healed, heart-comforted and shriven  
In this still dell and thicket of thy song.

## *As One Who Heareth*

As ONE who heareth some sweet sea-lark sing  
Where thunderous the thrumming tide-rips roll;  
Vainly the crested breakers flaunt and fling,  
For in his soul  
Are peace and dear content and wondering,  
And gentle dole;

As one who, wearying of the noonday glare,  
Seeketh the shade of oak or beech or pine,  
That in the twilight of the maiden-hair  
And cool, green vine  
Long he may dream, and, dreaming, sweetly wear  
Love's jessamine;

As one who, threading pearls on silken thread,  
Doth choose the greatest for his central part;  
So I these songs of mine have numberéd  
In which thou art  
Irradiate, enthronéd, cherishéd,  
Mine inmost Heart !

*Παρά θιν' ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο*

RESTLESS and restless, ceaselessly, easelessly, peace-  
lessly striving,

Scatter of sun-gems, moon-gems, dust of white  
stars on thy way,

Upward and up, O fretful one ! climbing, o'er-  
arching and diving,

Sea, when the word comes to cease, wilt thou  
(ah, I wonder !) obey ?

Is it the moon, the moon that so hungrily, hungrily  
leaping

Thou dost pursue ? Moon careth no whit, nay,  
no whit for thy smart.

Is it the wind, the west wind, that wooeth thee  
waking or sleeping ?

Rover is he ; many earth-things, O Sea, have a  
share in his heart.

Amethyst robe, white throat, pale fingers endlessly  
weaving,

Canst thou not rest ? What secret revolveth  
thou ? What hidden pain

Heaveth thy bosom ? Unshed to all time are the  
tears of thy grieving ?

“ These, they are shed ! ” sayest thou, “ but ah,  
those many remain ! ”

Yet thou hast beauty ! Queenly one ! Beauty  
that, peerlessly throbbing,  
Moveth the soul of me dumbly, even as thou art  
moved,  
Moon-led and wind-led, grief-led, blindly through  
aeons of sobbing.  
Loveless art thou ? Nay, Heart ! By me, yea,  
by me thou art loved !

## *Rossignol*

PASSIONATE and lonely, like the break of silver fountains,  
When the Castle sleeps, and no foot stirs, naught is seen,  
Save the soft moonlight in the Castle courtyard—  
Is the nightingale's song in my heart.

I open to you, sweet, lonely Singer, my windows.  
I was asleep. I dreamed. I awake. O Nightingale,  
I have steeped me in myrrh and ambergris and aloes,  
The nards and precious essences of thy song.

Passionate and lonely, I climb up the golden stairway,  
Whose every step is a note; I taste ineffable food.  
Someone bends to me near, ah! near. Is it you,  
Beloved?  
Sleep, Castle, sleep! and thou, O Nightingale,  
sing!

## *An He-goat upon the Mountains*

HIGH lifts the he-goat proud his shaggy head,  
Who, stepping like a prince, ascends the shale  
Sloped ladderwise from the Dictaeon vale,  
Plangent with streams that brim their loamy bed,  
And gains, unhasting so, the watershed,  
Where, careless of the heat, the ceaseless gale,  
Pale nostrils flaring, poised, he doth inhale  
Myrtle and brine, with pine-scents steeped and sped.  
His horns are burning to the touch. He seems  
Armoured in gems, the sun-rays play and dart  
So fiercely from him. Thus encased with beams,  
He broods, aloof, self-centred and apart,  
Dreaming. Ah, who may know what princely  
dreams  
Move to what music in that dreaming heart ?

## *Corsica*

BEYOND that veil of purple mist  
And past that band of amethyst,  
Parting the twins of sea and sky,  
What islands and what jewels lie ?

Beyond that veil of fairy mist  
And past that banded amethyst,  
Over the curve of the world, they say,  
The sunset kisses Corsica.

Little is Corsica, like a span,  
Little enough for the hand of a man,  
Little enough for my hand to grip,  
Floating and free, like a fairy ship;

Floating and free like a lily flower  
That a girl hath flung in an idle hour,  
Like a lily bloom flung down to float  
For an idle hour from an idle boat.

## *Acragas*

Who lit the torch and fired the flame ?  
    Acragas ! Acragas !  
Over the sea the galleys came  
    To Acragas ! To Acragas !  
Priests that chanted and maids in white,  
Captain and steersman and thalamite,  
    To Acragas long ago !

Stately and tall the buildings rise,  
    Acragas ! Acragas !  
Marble from sea-gate to sapphire skies,  
    In Acragas ! In Acragas !  
Windflowers grow in the creviced wall,  
Temples that tumble, and that is all  
    Of Acragas long ago !



Θρηϊκὴ χελιδὼν : *The Thracian*  
*Swallow*

HILLS and clouds and vast, confused glens,  
And winds that blow untinct of human breath,  
And tracks of avalanches through the dense  
Pine-woods, and rhododendrons strewn beneath,  
Ruinous, thrusting madly to the light,  
And torn rocks heaped pell-mell about the gills,  
Balsams and glooms and silences, and white  
Peaks that loom cloud-high, throned on thymy  
hills—

These are my dower, my Poet-meed ! Behold,  
All ye who list, my home and dwelling-place,  
That wander now, as wandered I of old,  
Singing by Haemus in enchanted Thrace.  
Because of these, lo, through my sorriest rhymes  
Swift Hebrus sings and stern Olympus climbs.

## *The Western Isle*

THROUGH all the process of the sun,  
In pine-tree's gloom and aspen's quiver,  
And where the light gleams on the river,  
These runes in rhythmic descant run.  
*I do destroy, and I deliver,*  
*Till giver and his gift are one !*

The day glides on to eventide,  
And sunset's gold and scarlet streamer  
Spreads royal tents before the dreamer,  
Where stream and sunset seaward ride.  
*I am thy Soul and thy Redeemer,*  
*Thy Lord, thy Saint, thy Crucified !*

The mountains stand in fickle stream  
Enmirrored through recurrent ages.  
'Spite Dog Star's heat and winter's rages,  
Unmoved the massy hillsides gleam.  
Wrest thou this riddle from the Sages !  
*They pass ! I stand ! I know ! They dream !*

Strange is it through the livelong day  
Of broken oath and light-held amour  
To seek out Truth in that fierce clamour.  
Stars in the sunlight hide away.  
*No axe was heard, nor sound of hammer*  
*In all the isle of Colonsay !*

Throughout the process of the sun,  
None shall destroy and none deliver,  
None shall be slayer, none be giver,  
    Until this rune hath rightly run.  
*Through mountain gleam and fickle river,*  
    *The dreamer and his dream are one !*

*Ἀστέρας εἰσαθρεῖς, ἀστὴρ ἐμός !*

Six thousand stars—that is all I see,  
But the telescope shows me a million more,  
And behind, yet a million, or two, or three.  
What matters? Suffice this six thousand for me,  
Six thousand nails in the heavenly door;

Six thousand jewel-studded nails,  
Patterning out the heavenly Gate—  
Surely the heart of me faints and fails  
With the star-sprent deeps and the wind that wails  
Doomful between us, and desolate;

Star-sprent deeps and the wind that cries,  
And the pool of the myriad nenuphars,  
And the face of a myriad sleepless eyes—  
Let the pool, and the face, and the gate suffice,  
For, hid in my heart, are six thousand stars !

# *The Cry of the Wild Wings*

*To W. H. Hudson*

DESOLATE flats and infinite saltings, sand-hills rough  
with the marram grass,

Far away, white-curved in a bow, the wavelets  
of the gathering tide,

World's end, time's end, the sad, strange strewing  
abroad of all that ever was,

Westerly sun, unpeopled wastes, the primitive  
things that alone abide,

When the wisdoms and follies pass.

Death in the sky and death in the sea, death in the  
smoothed-out, wave-ribbed sand,

Silence that stabs like the death-scream of the  
tide-trapped, way-lost wight,

Voices that chuckle and voices that sneer, where  
never a human soul doth stand,

Petulant cries of the quarrelling gulls, strung out  
like a riband athwart the light

That lies like a blood-stained hand.

So at length the sun withdraws, and the last shrieks  
of the sea-mews cease.

Dark is upon me like a robe, but day dwells still  
in the topmost cloud.

Wavering, breaking and changing form, come  
    clanging hosts of the home-bent geese,  
    White with the sun. O harping beat of wings  
        both shrill and deep and loud—  
So, so in my heart is peace !

## *Twilight upon the Sea*

ENDLESS the twilight and mystery,  
The falling of night upon the sea,  
The cry of the dusk and the soul's deep urge  
To the dim horizon's misty verge,  
And the radiance scarcely seen and far  
Of one pale, unreflected star.

Endless the unremittent roar  
Of breakers upon the senseless shore;  
Yet never a breath stirs one black tress  
To life on the silent cypresses,  
That darkling like flames of darkness brood  
Against the sea's dun solitude.

Endless the wheeling of the night,  
That whirls the sun down out of sight  
And hurls the stars into the sky,  
Blotting the twilight and mystery;  
Yet the cry of the sea and the soul's deep urge  
Climb still to the dark night's utmost verge.

*By Offa's Dyke*

SOMETIMES, at sunset, in a leaden sky  
That seems the world's dread, bitter dreams to hold,  
Will gleam a single rift of transient gold;  
Then swift this point of radiant ardency  
Spreads out, transfusing field and wood that lie  
Shadowed and still; and there are pines whose bold,  
Fantastic branches stand forth aureoled  
In light that pierces like a human cry.  
Thus is it ere the darkness. O, if grief  
That seemeth suageless yet can be assuaged,  
And if, with even, day's long dimness cease,  
Wilt thou repine that this thine age is brief,  
Or this thy battle forfeit ere engaged,  
Or this thy torment servant to thy peace?



## *Mare Liguriense*

THE long horizon sleeping, and a star  
Silver, and silver-gold the risen moon,  
And waves that follow waves in chimeless tune,  
Slowly, monotonously regular—

O South, O tideless ! give me of thine alms,  
That in thy gold and silver I may cease,  
Winning to this my Soul's forgotten peace  
Within the wind-hushed shadow of thy palms.

## *The July Storm*

WASH ! Swash ! Batter ! Crash !  
Helter ! Skelter ! Pash ! Smash !  
Hell's loose ! The rain !  
Flash ! Crash ! Again !  
Wee ! Swee ! The bubbles dancing down the  
runnel,  
The rivers of the earth poured through one funnel,  
The jagged hail  
That, like a flail,  
Beats out the clusters of the half-ripe grain !

Hiss ! Spit ! What of it ?  
Batter ! Roar ! Something's hit !  
Whirlwinds of rain !  
Crash ! Flash ! Again !  
Hiss ! Spit ! Pash ! Crash ! The giants are in  
battle,  
Red-Eye and Big-Voice ! Which spoilt whose new  
rattle ?  
Pitter ! Bang !  
Swoosh ! Pang !  
Big-Voice and Red-Eye, coats off, might and main !

Roar ! Pour ! More ! More !  
Flash ! Spit ! Red-Eye's gore !  
Woo ! Swoo ! The rain !  
Less now ! Again !  
Yes ! Less ! The end ! No ! No ! There !  
Blunder ! Blunder !  
The storm retires to one last blast of thunder.  
Mist ! Fragrance ! Sun !  
Over now ! Done !  
And bird-songs ringing down the dripping lane !

## *Black !*

BLACK.

Black to a hand's breadth before the face.

No trees, no hedges, nothing to be seen.  
The primal dark. The final dwelling-place.

The womb

Of what shall be: of what is, what hath been,  
The tomb.

Aye, stretch the hand before the questing face !

Black !

Roar

Of a sad sea dragging pebbles down.

Up again ! Roar ! Friend Sea, you cannot reach  
The strip of drift-weed strewn out dank and brown,

That lies

Upon the top verge of your climbing beach.

Be wise,

And when your spent strength drags the pebbles  
down,

Roar !

Rain,  
Like the tears of unassuagéd grief,  
Windless, wet, forthright, rectilinear,  
Drumming on highway, pattering on leaf,  
As though  
Ten thousand elves caparisoned for war  
Did go  
Forthright with spears upon a widow's grief.  
Rain !

## *Nocturne*

VELVET green is the grass in the gloaming,  
Shadowless stand the shadowy trees.  
Dove-grey the quiet clouds are roaming,  
Dove-grey, and touched at the edge like seas  
Mistily foaming.

Slowly the land lifts to the horizon,  
Tense as some heart that lifts in prayer  
To the far off gleam it knows not, yet cries on.  
“ Lord ! If indeed Thee a Mother bare,  
*Kyrie eleison !*”

## *The Deserted Garden*

NOT too deserted, seldom visited,  
The peach-trees growing rank upon the wall,  
Nine blushing, pale-green globes (but nine in all,  
Where, better-pruned, were six score gathered)  
The box-trimmed walks, the fragrant parsley-bed,  
This garden not too great and not too small,  
Old, but not ancient, kind-eyed, whimsical,  
With birds' autumnal music garnishéd—  
Fit haunt to dream in, hours by happy hours,  
Basking in scents of pensive-dreaming flowers,  
Cool, tanging odours of the fertile mould,  
Wafted none knoweth whence. O strange, sweet  
    shiver  
Of soft delight ! What Presences unfold  
Their dove-grey wings within this place for ever ?

## *In the Forest*

IN the forest, croons and cries,  
Laughing shapes and glancing eyes,  
Creaking boughs and reeds that rustle,  
Furry things that grip and tussle,  
Little noises, slipping shadows,  
Glades and glooms and basking meadows,  
And the babbling of a stream—  
Thin and threadlike, there it passes  
Through the nidding-nodding grasses,  
Ferns that drowse and flowers that dream.

Oaks are wise, but to the beech  
Nighest comes mere human speech.  
Oak is broad and strong and stately,  
But the beech can croon sedately  
Tiny staves and short-breathed snatches,  
Rondeaux, roundelays and catches,  
To the piping of the wind.  
Watch him swinging leaves and branches  
To the swaying of his haunches !  
Oak is wise but beech is kind.

Beech is kindlier. Brother oak  
Has good points like other folk,  
And strange glory plays and flashes  
Round the bronzed green of the ashes.



Birch is wondrous slim and slender,  
Woman-tressed, white, pure and tender.  
Fragrant swings the tasselled larch,  
Where the pines, all gloom and thunder,  
March abreast and part asunder,  
Chanting, chanting as they march.

In the forest, nights and days  
Pass in learning forest ways.  
Different thoughts have different creatures,  
Different likings, different natures.  
Some go swifter, some more slowly.  
Some are haughtier, some more lowly.  
Each some quintessential grace,  
Young-eyed, hating not, nor scorning,  
Giveth for the wood's adorning.  
Learn we so the forest ways !

## *The Adder that Creeps*

THE adder that creeps among the withered leaves  
Slithers along, slithers along.  
He has a heart that seldom aches or grieves,  
And not for long, and not for long.  
His thin tongue, as he slithers, softly weaves  
A fairy song, a fairy song.

The badger wrinkles his perceptive snout  
Beneath the moon, beneath the moon.  
He sings the best when folks are none about,  
To hear him croon, to hear him croon.  
He hums quite low, you'll never find him shout  
A merry tune, a merry tune.

The bat is hunting insects as he flies  
Flickering there, flickering there.  
He shuns the world and all its vanities  
However fair, however fair.  
He sings, what time his merry trade he plies  
Up in the air, up in the air.

## *The June Garden Fairies*

LIGHT and laughter, sun and rain,  
Weave we still the golden chain,  
Children of the childlike hours  
Dancing in and out the flowers,  
Cups and coronals and bells,  
Honey stored in waxen cells,  
Perfumes of the heady clover—  
Weave it so, and so it's over !

Chime and chanting, rose and ring,  
Pearls drop when the thrushes sing,  
And the pearls on bushes glisten;  
Children need but look and listen.  
Thrushes sing, and children play.  
Which the happier, who shall say ?  
Thrushes sing and children patter,  
Hearts and tongues, all chitter-chatter.

Sylph and fairy, gnome and elf,  
Let the child amuse himself.  
Cricket, chirping in the grasses,  
Loves the happiest lads and lasses,  
And the solemn-humming bee  
Twinkles, twinkles merrily.  
Weave the heady-scented clover,  
Weave it so—and so it's over !

## *Beauty*

To capture Beauty on the wing  
Is not a very easy thing,  
To woo Queen Beauty as she flies,  
Needs strange and wonder-sharpened eyes.  
For, sudden as the glint of doves  
When wanderer through the thicket moves,  
And swift as aspen's silver sheen  
When wind-puff stirs her soberer green.  
And quiet as the mauve and rose  
That on the sand-bank's shade-side shows,  
When eve is closing in on day  
With endless parti-tones of grey,  
And hushed as birds that sing ere dawn,  
And secret as the mountain fawn  
Whom coppices of hazel hide,  
And cruel as the Solway tide  
When wind and flood together run,  
And blinding as the Eastern sun,  
And sweet as honey of the bee—  
So sudden, secret, sweet is she.

To hold the essences of dreams  
Is not so simple as it seems.  
For dreams are swifter than the light;  
They flash, and vanish out of sight.

Their feet go softlier than the mist  
Whose folds are pearl and amethyst;  
Their eyes are brighter than the fire  
That burned the roofs of ancient Tyre;  
Their wings, like falcons', swoop and poise;  
Their voice is as the waters' noise,  
Now soft and pleasuresome and cool  
As ripples on a dimpling pool,  
Now heaving downward with a roar  
Of deaths and dooms for evermore.  
Ah, woe to him that dreams awry !  
Fame, love and fortune pass him by.  
And well for him that redes aright  
His fates and visions of the night.  
All secrets unto him disclose,  
And like a fount his music flows.  
He is the God-enchanted swan  
Who wings and sings for ever on,  
On whose white breast the sunset plays  
In gold and green and crimson rays,  
And whose white throat is ever blest  
With all the tincture of his breast.

To weave a coat of sunbeams rare  
Is not an art taught everywhere.  
For sunbeams are the subtlest things.  
Their thoughts are like the thoughts of kings.  
They give whatever in them is,

Content with the mere giving's bliss.  
Heedless of race, of name or creed,  
Their lust of life is in their speed;  
And, eloquent of love divine,  
They spill their beauty as they shine.  
Through tiniest cracks and holes they slip,  
Yet stars are of their fellowship.  
They raise the tree, they loose the flood,  
They sing with sparkles in the blood.  
Through them the lover lifts his sigh,  
Through them the poor, the outcast die,  
Through them the warrior hordes advance,  
The rich men scheme, the children dance;  
And still their net of light they weave  
For those that have, and those that thief.

To win the pardons of the rain  
Makes little loss, and mickle gain.  
For so the Mother-heart of God  
Draws forth her green herb from the sod,  
The herb so gentle and so pure  
That shall the Caesars' might outdure,  
And bloom with brush and shrub upon  
Proud Rome and blood-strewn Babylon.  
The rain, so diligent and meek  
Ever the lowest room to seek,  
Doth swell the brook and brim the stream  
With raptures such as poets dream.

The thirsty lands of torrid South  
Yearn for sweet rain through dearth and drouth,  
Till all the rivers of the skies  
Shall scarce assuage such agonies.  
Thus comes the rain on hill and coast  
With mercies of the Holy Ghost,  
And virtues of the heart revealed  
Their herblike fragrance gently yield.

If Beauty dwell within the breast,  
Then Beauty shall reward thy quest;  
But if the heart be dark within,  
To Beauty thou shalt scarcely win.  
Lonesome and toilsome be thy path,  
Girt round with gates and shapes of wrath,  
Yet let the rains of mercy heal  
The gaping wound, the aching weal,  
And let the rays of mercy fall  
Till dreams draw nigh, till visions call,  
Then, lo, as with a sudden gleam,  
Upon thy brow Truth's diadem,  
And all the garments of thy woe  
To cloth of gold transmuted so,  
And on thy hand Love's plighted ring—  
For Beauty dwells in everything;  
And he that loveth, seeketh duty,  
To him shall God send endless Beauty.

## *The Garden of a Thousand Waterfalls*

THE song of birds, the water-lilies' spell,  
The peonies athwart the runlets bent,  
The tolling of the temple's olden bell,  
The sunset sheen on hill and battlement—  
Back, back and back the Chinese garden calls,  
My Garden of a Thousand Waterfalls.

The silks and satins rustle as they go  
With soft sedateness through the wilderness  
Of tintured sweets; and fans wave to and fro,  
This wave, a sigh, this folding, a caress.  
Slow, courteous speech, light laughter, ancient walls—  
My Garden of a Thousand Waterfalls.

Water has music that is nigh to speech,  
And peonies are like a colour-chord;  
And paths that wind by almond and by peach  
Are like to jars of perfumes freshly poured,  
Whose each outpouring some new sense enthrals—  
My Garden of a Thousand Waterfalls !

But, O, when moon has risen, and her light  
Spills like a veil on peony and rose,  
And all the marble terraces are white,  
And white the spray of each dark fountain shows;



That is the hour when my heart best recalls  
My Garden of a Thousand Waterfalls.

For scented, scented, tinkle little feet,  
And through the jasmine peeps a flower-face.  
Even to-day, to-day my heart doth beat,  
That hath been dust these many myriad days.  
Ah, Love ! Moon sleeps. Night droops in ebon palls.  
Ah, Garden of a Thousand Waterfalls !

# *The Melian Aphrodite*

## *Vénus de Milo*

IN days of old, when Gods still walked the earth,  
No need was there to hew the marble form.  
All Hellas held their gracious deeds, their mirth,  
Their wisdom and their loves. By sun and storm

The Gods paced free, and companied with men.  
Visibly Pallas stood upon the mount,  
Apollo's lyre sang through the Delphic glen,  
And Bacchus danced and loved by Theban fount.

The Gods have passed and gone. In chilly stone  
Men seek to immure the marvel of those limbs,  
Which then with more than royal splendour shone.  
Quenched is the torch. Hushed are the mystic  
hymns.

O Aphrodite, whom we Melian call,  
Though sightless stare those once so starry eyes,  
And stone thou standest in an alien hall,  
One, Worshipful ! seeks still thy mysteries.

Dost thou remember, in the little wood  
Of ilexes and beeches intertwined,  
The fount o'erhung with rose-bushes, where stood  
Thy loveliness, O Cyprian, enshrined ?

Dost thou remember gentle hands that wove  
Garlands for thee, and strewed sweet-smelling box  
And frail verbena through thy little grove  
So nestled on the terrace of the rocks ?

Dost thou remember how the pilgrims came,  
White-robed and chanting, while the little bay  
Shone in the furnace of the noonday flame ?  
Past is it ? Ah ! Long gone, and far away !

O Queen of Love, turn those sweet, sightless eyes  
Once more on me; and those maimed, lovely  
limbs  
Make live for me their radiant mysteries,  
Who chant this last, this least of all thy hymns.

Be pleased, Most Gracious, so to enlighten me,  
That, though this eye of flesh behold thee not,  
The Spirit's eye may thy true Sponsor be,  
To keep thy worship pure and unforget.

My thoughts and dreams I may not hew in stone.  
I have no limner's skill. I stand apart  
From the great world. One thing that is mine own,  
Gladly I give. Take, Queen ! my poet's heart !

# *The Herefordshire Hills*

## *Aquarelle*

A DRIFT of rain on the far, blue hills  
In pinks and chromes of infinite changes—  
The burnt browns of the midway ranges—  
Leafless old pear-tree that foreground fills  
With splatters of light where the boughs are wet.  
Angled and gaunt, like a twisted dragon,  
Derelict, dirt-stained stands harvest-waggon,  
Garnet and chrysoprase on him yet.  
Washes of pink give the hedgerows' hope,  
Bud upon bud for the next year's green.  
Softly the stream slips in between,  
Lipping the breaks in the southern slope  
And balancing well with the rain in the sky,  
Grey, madder and blue, this November weather  
When frost, wet and sun are out playing together.  
Dearth and December come on by and by,  
But Autumn and Plenty are loth to go.  
Sooner the Wheel of the Sun shall slacken  
Than blackness take the gold of the bracken,  
Ere the young fronds push to the light from below !

## *The Hills of Eye*

THE hills of Eye, the hills of Eye,  
Some of them barren and some of them green,  
Some of them low, but none of them high,  
Are the hills that bound my heart's demesne.

Hills I have gazed at, but never trod,  
What on your further edge doth lie,  
What of the mysteries of God,  
Veiled in the sunset, O hills of Eye ?

Ye smile and ye speak not, but dwell serene,  
Touched with strange glories, while we that plod  
The valley ways in toil and teen  
Gaze afar off at the walls of God;

Gaze afar off at the walls of Gold,  
And the light like the Angel's lambent Sword,  
And beneath, ye Hills, like a cup to hold  
The scarlet and gold of the Wine outpoured !

Vision comes best when the day is done.  
We of the vale here, our toil put by,  
Please God ! shall follow yon lambent Sun  
Over the hills, the hills of Eye !

## *Clare Bridge from King's*

*To Rupert Brooke*

THESE places are best kept for quiet use;  
There's something in the soft, decorous sky  
That chimes in with the water, saunteringly  
Speedless and weed-laced; and those lemon hues  
On the grey, crook-backed Clare bridge, how they  
blend

And fire and fuse, like cloud and river caught  
Together in a poet's random thought,  
The thought that burns and fleets, and has no end.  
This willow at my right hand, and this field  
With one old horse that grazes, and, beneath,  
The sudden-dipping martins' glossy wings;  
And all as though upon a silver shield  
That time had tarnished, with the mage's breath,  
Appeared the sudden names of deathless kings.

## *Sheila's Lament*

CALLING, calling, calling from the haunted corrie,  
Voices, voices, voices of the hidden deer.  
Angus, Angus, Angus slain in far off foray,  
Buried, buried, buried nigh on forty year.

Glen mists, glen mists, glen mists weaving round my  
lover,  
Dark pines, dark pines, dark pines weeping on his  
grave.  
Near by, near by, near by, skreel of lonely plover.  
Sheila, Sheila, Sheila far across the wave.

Pines here, pines here, not the pines that Sheila knew  
once.  
Mists here, mists here, not the mists of Colin-  
traive.  
Angus, Angus, Angus, thine the heart they slew once,  
Buried, buried, buried with thee in one grave.

## *Sir Gambren Achieves*

THUS through the golden barrier he broke,  
And thus the last gold dragon-shape he slew.  
Gûn's high throne shattered at the deathly stroke.  
Hrid's horn he seized, and thrice the blast he  
blew.

The white snake slid down from the wizard's oak,  
Where scorpions feed on Ughtred's poison-dew.

O, well for him then, were his heart but pure,  
And woe for him, did one ill thought intrude.  
One thing it is the dim years to endure,  
The forest-deeps, the falls, the buffets shrewd;  
And one to watch still, when all is secure,  
To bide, but not to fear, the sleepless feud.

Well for the knight that hath achieved his quest,  
But woe for him that drowseth on his spear !  
None knoweth how Sir Gambren crowned his gest.  
The records, they are gone this many a year.  
Ill hap or good, Our Lady judgeth best.  
Sweet Mary, us thy penitents do thou hear !



*I am the Butterfly that doth Unfold*

I AM the butterfly that doth unfold  
At dawn her wings of virgin gold,  
    And sips the chalices  
    Of lilies, giving kiss for dewy kiss,  
And peers deep in the heart of damask rose,  
Until her perfume-secrets, all untold,  
    Shall tremble and disclose.

I am the song that trills within love's throat,  
The instinctive, yet-unuttered note  
    Of some lone, raptured bird  
    Who but now Spring's sweet mating-call hath  
        heard.  
The sunshine sparkles on his plummy wings.  
He sees that one on whom his heart doth dote,  
    And straightaway he sings.

I am the upland where the white snows lie  
Bleakly aswoon till May is by.  
    Then comradely and sweet  
    April with June in me do dance and greet.  
The grasses spring, the starry blossoms raise  
In parks of bloom unto the lucent sky  
    Sun-drunken shouts of praise.

## *Rose Day*

*Wednesday, June 22nd, 1921*

ROSE DAY, the Rose of England, the Wild Rose,  
The Rose of Mercy, and a laughing Queen,  
Young still, and happy, as a Queen should be;  
And with her, as it should be, laughing, those  
Bright Presences of Mercy—all unseen.  
Ah, Alexandra, God doth go with thee !

Rose Day, the Joy of England, the sweet Flower,  
Simple in mien, yet Queenly, love-encrowned,  
Robed from on High with wondrous Dignity—  
This day of June, this Rose Day, is thy dower.  
Laughing, thou goest, Queen, thy happy Round.  
Ah, Alexandra, God doth go with thee !

## *The Elm, that Noble-branching Weed*

THE elm, that noble-branching weed,  
Draws all his glory from a seed;  
A seed begets the stubborn thorn;  
And oak from acorn-cup is born.

Rivers take rise in trickling rills;  
A heap of dust becomes the hills;  
Small coral-worms broad lands create,  
And tiny deeds build up the State.

Man, deem not that thy thoughts of passion  
But pass, and naught of evil fashion.  
Thin vapour-mists compact the stars,  
And privy hates bud world-wide wars.

Yet cheerful wont and choice of worth  
May still renew a joyful earth.  
Each moment unto thee is given  
To use and choose for hell or heaven.

## *The Old Church Steeple*

SWIFTLY the hours go by,  
    Marked on my dial,  
This, opportunity,  
    This, self-denial,  
This one, for revelry,  
    This, but for trial.

Cheered with my merry chimes,  
    Dumped with my doleful,  
Calling to prayer sometimes,  
    Solemn and soulful.  
(Sermons hath Parson Grimes  
    More than a bowlful !)

Up in the ringers' loft  
    Jackdaws are calling.  
Parson his wig hath doffed,  
    Folks homeward crawling.  
All round my belfry, soft  
    Shadows are falling.

*Brown Water-rat, black Kerry Bull*

BROWN water-rat, black Kerry bull  
Within the selfsame meadow—  
With business each life is full,  
Where green the water-grasses quiver  
Beside the little, running river  
That seeks in sudden, silent shadow  
The thorn-hung pool.

Coats sleek and smooth with suave content,  
Their life bears never a shadow.  
Each tugs his share of grasses, bent,  
Green, where the July ripples shiver  
Across the swift race of the river,  
That brims the gold-cups in the meadow  
With plenishment.

When low the light of summer falls,  
And dew lies on the meadow,  
To play, to slumber sweetly calls  
The tinkle of the little river,  
That night and day doth sing for ever  
Alike in sunshine and in shadow  
Soft madrigals.

Brown water-rat, black Kerry bull,  
Swift-eyes and brooding shadow,  
Each, perfect, carven, beautiful,  
Dwells so with me for ever  
Beside the busy, tinkling river  
That seeks, beyond the silent meadow,  
Its thorn-hung pool.

## *Cairn Gorm*

SCARRED and riven, the granite cliff drops sheer,  
Lipped with the red and purple of the ling,  
Porphyry-bright in the clefts where juniper  
And crooked pine-roots cling.

Upward the pines curve like a massive roof,  
Dark-green, the roof-felt of some giant's tent,  
Who pastures wild things, huge and sage, aloof  
In self-sought banishment.

Still doth the raven build among the crags,  
Still rings his *cra ! cra !* through the lonely fells,  
And where the last rude fissure juts and jags,  
The golden eagle dwells.

Upward the pines curve, down the great cliff swoons,  
As one who downward tumbles on for ever,  
While through the sloping pine-wood whines and  
croons  
The unseen, hungry river.

*Under the Great Stone the Dark  
Trout lie*

UNDER the great stone the dark trout lie,  
Hid in the depths of the peat-brown pool,  
Watching the bubbles that flicker by.  
Under the great stone the dark trout lie,  
Hid in the depths of the peat-brown pool.

Rushes are green, and sedges sigh,  
And the wind of the uplands breathes soft and cool  
To the eerie lilt of the curlew's cry.  
Under the great stone the dark trout lie,  
Hid in the depths of the peat-brown pool.

Silver and blue is the sun-filled sky.  
Harebell and crowfoot, the world is full  
Of the dream and the gold and the melody.  
Under the great stone the dark trout lie,  
Hid in the depths of the peat-brown pool.



*Treeless and Barren the Fields stretch  
to the Sunset*

TREELESS and barren the fields stretch to the sunset,  
Long fields, dropping, dropping slowly to the sea.  
A smell of rain, gold smears, dull walls, the billows'  
onset,  
Clamouring, tugging, crying, tearing deep rifts in  
the heart of me.

Gales there have been, many gales, and with the  
tide-turn  
Surely the fretting, anguished, moonless gusts  
will rise,  
When the souls of the drowned, the drowned, out  
yonder that died, turn  
Flowing and streaming landward once more with  
their screaming, hopeless cries.

Where the fields end, slate cliffs drop dark and  
jagged,  
Over the sunset, impalpably, veil on sooty veil,  
Staining the gold, draw clouds, low-vaulted, ancient,  
ragged,  
And out at sea to the inward ear tone deep, faint  
moans of to-night's gale.

## *Wisdom*

WHAT is the end of wisdom? It is this!

The song is much, but more the singer's heart,  
The love is much, but more the lover is,  
The wound is much, but, ah, the hidden smart!

A little cup may many jewels hold,  
A little mind bear many cares of state,  
But man is not more wise for being old,  
Nor warlike speech doth make the Captain great.

What is the ground of wisdom? Gemmed with  
flowers,  
When breathes the south wind, Spring comes  
dancing in.  
Who rules by Love shall sway the heavenly Powers.  
Where Wisdom ends, there God's Love doth  
begin.



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